

the bone-breccia of the Lebanon caves, viz. the Ibex, Elk, Red Deer, and Bison. All doubts on this subject are now solved by the fact of Dr. Conder, R.E., having obtained on Mount Carmel a specimen, which has been sent to Cambridge, and pronounced by Prof. Newton to be the true *Cervus capreolus*.

Dr. Conder states that this Deer inhabits the thickets on the sides of Carmel, and is also met with further south, in the wooded country round Sheikh Iskander, where it gives its name to one of the principal valleys, Wady Yahmûr. Special interest attaches to the discovery from the fact of its being known to the Arabs as Yahmûr, identical with the Hebrew (יָהֲמוֹר), translated "fallow deer" in our version, and never before identified with any ruminant known to exist in Palestine.

Palestine is by far the most south-easterly region where the Roebuck has yet been found either living or among recent remains. Pallas gives *Cervus pygargus* as the Roebuck of Northern Asia, which, though identified with our Roebuck by Giebel, is generally considered to be distinct.

May 16, 1876.

Dr. A. Günther, F.R.S., V.P., in the Chair.

Mr. Sclater exhibited a skin of a rare Pacific Parrot, *Coriphilus kuhli**, which had been sent to him for examination by Dr. Elliott Coues, C.M.Z.S. This specimen had been obtained by Dr. T. Hale Streets, U.S. Navy, at Washington Island of the Palmyra group, as indicated in the following remarks:—

"Washington, or New York, Island, the habitat of this Parrot, is situated in latitude $4^{\circ} 41' 10\frac{1}{2}''$ north, and longitude $160^{\circ} 18' 0\cdot5''$ west. It was discovered in 1798 by Captain Edmund Fanning, an American; but he did not land upon it. The United-States Exploring Expedition under the command of Captain Wilkes passed it by in 1840, and reported no anchorage. The island is an obliterated atoll, and is densely covered with vegetation, the cocoa-nut palm predominating.

"It is evident from the following untechnical description taken from 'Fanning's Voyages,' that this bird existed on Fanning Island when it was first discovered. 'Amongst the birds was one species about the size of our Robin (*Turdus migratorius*), with a breast of scarlet-coloured feathers, the under portion of the body being finished off with bright red, the neck of a golden colour, back a lively green with a yellow beak, except the very points, which were of a light dun colour, the wings and tail being both of a jet-black, and the last tipped off with white; it was a most beautiful and lovely bird, with its brilliant and richly variegated plumage. We were much chagrined, while observing these, to see a Man-of-war Hawk flying by with one in his mouth, apparently having just caught it.'

* *Domicella kuhli*. Finsch, Papag. ii. p. 749.

“Washington and Fanning are the only islands of the group (containing besides the islands Christmas and Palmyra) in which the bird is found. Washington and Fanning are situated closely together, distant from one another 77 nautical miles in a north-westerly and south-easterly direction, and they are remote from the other islands of the group.

“To quote again from ‘Fanning’s Voyages :’ ‘As at Fanning’s, so here [Washington] we could perceive no token of its being at all inhabited.’

“They are still uninhabited ; but the natives of the groups south of the equator visit them occasionally to gather the cocoa-nuts and to express the oil that is in them. We found such a party at Washington Island at the time of our visit. We engaged some of the Kanakas to catch the Lories alive for us. They used two pieces of bamboo, each about a yard in length. On one was perched a tame bird ; and from the end of the other was suspended a running noose made of the bark of the cocoa-nut tree. The tame bird as it was carried along uttered a harsh, rasping sound ; and others came out of the trees and perched alongside it on the bamboo stick, and the man noosed them by means of the other bamboo.”

Mr. Selater remarked that it was of great interest to ascertain *positively* the correct habitat of this Lory. Dr. Finsch, relying upon Bourjot’s assertions, had indicated Fanning Island as its most probable *patria*, but was not without much doubt on the subject.

Dr. Günther read an extract from a letter received from Commander W. E. Cookson, R.N., of H.M.S. ‘Peterel,’ dated Coquimbo, March 9, 1876. Commander Cookson stated that two of the large Land-Tortoises procured from the Galapagos Islands in June 1875 were then on board, and that he was in hopes that he should be able to land them alive in England, where he expected to arrive in the beginning of next June.

The two tortoises were male and female, and, although not of a very large size, were the largest he was able to procure, and were undoubtedly adults : the male weighed 270 lbs., and the female 117 lbs. Besides these, he had the shell, head, and feet of five others from Albemarle and Abingdon Islands.

Commander Cookson had also collected and preserved specimens of *Amblyrhynchus cristatus* from the different islands of the group which he had visited, and had preserved some of the several kinds of fishes which were caught during their stay. Commander Cookson anticipated being ninety days at sea on his homeward voyage, and was afraid there would be some difficulty in keeping the Tortoises alive, as they were great eaters ; he had, however, laid in a large supply of cactus, of which they were very fond. They would also eat soaked biscuit.

Dr. Peter Comrie, Staff-Surgeon R.N., exhibited the zoological specimens which he had collected during the survey of the S.E.

coast of New Guinea by H.M.S. 'Basilisk,' and read the following remarks :—

"In introducing the specimens now exhibited, my object is to show that something, although small, was done in the way of advancing natural history during the running survey made by H.M.S. 'Basilisk' of the S.E. coast of New Guinea. The opportunities were limited, and the time was short, the vessel arriving on that coast on the 20th of February, 1874, and finally leaving on May 23rd, the portion of coast embraced being from S.E. Cape to Cape Rigny, the E. point of Astrolabe Gulf. A considerable portion of time was spent among the group of islands off East Cape; but with the exception of the large D'Entrecasteaux group, where many fine butterflies were obtained, I did not find these islands at all good collecting-ground, and it was more to the northward, in Huon Gulf, on the mainland, that the richest spoils were captured. This was especially the case with Snakes and Insects, and was partly owing to the woodcutting carried on here to supply fuel for steaming-purposes on our passage to Amboyna. When any specimen considered curious was met with by the men engaged woodcutting, it was invariably saved for the 'Doctor;' and in this way I am almost entirely indebted to the men and, in some cases, the officers of the ship for what I now show. The mammals, all marsupials, were obtained alongside from the natives, who generally brought them alive, and traded them for pieces of iron hoops, which constitute the current coin all along the coast. With the exception of a Pig and a dun-coloured Dog, no mammals other than marsupials were observed. Some of the specimens are not in the best state of preservation, owing partly to my having had to leave the cases at Singapore, there having been no room for them in the hold of H.M.S. 'Basilisk,' and also to the plague of ants brought on board with the wood, and which, unless the specimens were kept enveloped in an atmosphere of carbolic acid, very soon made short work of them.

"I have no intention on this occasion to do more than generally allude to the collection as a whole, as many of the species are new, and others, although known, have hitherto not been found in New Guinea: the details connected with geographical range, diagnosis of new species, and their description, a work of time, I must leave to abler hands. I will only give a general *résumé* of the more important novelties as kindly furnished me by Mr. Selater and Dr. Günther:—

"The *Mammals* are 9 in number; the most notable of which are 2 *Petauri* (Flying Squirrels), which differ from their nearest congener, *Petaurus ariel*, in being of a decidedly rufous tint; but whether specifically distinct can only be ascertained when their skulls have been extracted. The *Perameles* has lately been described by Dr. Peters as collected by D'Albertis in New Guinea. Two of the Bats have hitherto not been found in New Guinea.

"The *Birds*, 13 in number, belong to 11 species, the most important addition being *Manucodia* (Bird of Paradise), a new species, and which Mr. Selater has consented kindly to name after myself; this example was the only one either seen or procured. A rather rare Tern, found by Dr. McGillivray in Torres Straits, completes what

is noteworthy as regards the birds; and as Mr. Sclater has a paper on the subject of my birds, it will be better left to him.

“The *Snakes* are 7 in number; among which is a new species, a large specimen of Jukes’s Sea-snake, hitherto not found nearer New Guinea than Torres Straits, and a species of *Tropidonotus*, hitherto not found in New Guinea.

“The Death-adder I was about stepping on, so thoroughly was its colour approximated to the surrounding vegetation; and an officer who accompanied me shot it as it was raising its head to strike me.

“*Butterflies*. These I am unable to exhibit, as they are not yet set up; but it is expected that a considerable number of new species may result on examination.

“*Land-shells*. These, few in number, Messrs. Adams and Angas will determine; and I have only brought down this evening a unique *Helix* discovered by M’Gillivray, which I found on the leaves of a species of *Pandanus* in Huon Gulf.”

Prof. P. M. Duncan, F.R.S., read the second part of his memoir on the Madreporaria dredged up during the expedition of H.M.S. ‘Porcupine’ in 1869–70. Dr. Duncan stated that the first part of this communication had been already published in the Society’s Transactions (vol. viii. p. 303), and that the present portion related to several species which were not therein mentioned. They were all simple forms, and lived in the deep sea or in shallow water. The most important species were from the Mediterranean and Atlantic off the Spanish coast. The genera *Caryophyllia*, *Paraecyathus*, *Flabellum*, and *Desmophyllum* were the best-represented.

The examination of this series of corals did not necessitate any modifications of the views expressed in the former paper regarding the peculiar form of the non-reef-building Madreporaria and the affinities of many recent species with fossils.

This paper will be published in full in the ‘Transactions.’

The following papers were read:—

1. Remarks on some Indian and, more especially, Bornean Mammals. By Dr. A. GÜNTHER, V.P.Z.S., Keeper of the Zoological Department, British Museum.

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(Plates XXXVI., XXXVII.)

A collection of Mammals sent by Mr. Low to the British Museum from the mainland of Borneo, opposite to Labuan, contains several specimens affording additional information as regards the fauna of that island and the distribution of the species inhabiting it. As their examination necessarily involved a comparison with specimens and species from other localities, I have added those of my notes on